

The relationship between emotional intelligence and well-being among women academics of Royal University of Bhutan

Kesang Wangmo, Sonam Daker

Department of Language Education, Samtse College of Education, Royal University of Bhutan, Bhutan

Received: 11 Jun 2021; Received in revised form: 05 Jul 2021; Accepted: 16 Jul 2021
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Abstract

This qualitative study examined the Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) women academics' understanding of relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and well-being. The participants selected through a purposive sampling consisted of 14 women academics from RUB colleges spread across the country. The data were collected using a semi-structured interview, and analyzed with thematic analysis procedures. The findings revealed RUB women academics' concept of relationship between EI and well-being in terms of intrapersonal and interpersonal relationship, and general mood. The findings also revealed the participants' awareness of the impact of EI on their personal and professional well-being. Further, the findings highlighted the challenges the academics faced to be emotionally intelligent in all situations, and aspiration for enhancement of their EI through trainings. Therefore, one of the recommendations of the study is initiation of training in terms of workshops or professional development to enhance emotional intelligence.

Keywords— Emotional intelligence, well-being, intrapersonal, interpersonal, mood.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) was founded in June 2003, with the guidance of the Royal Charter in order to consolidate the provision of tertiary education in the country and to efficiently cater to the needs of the nation (RUB, Strategic Plan, 2018- 2030). The RUB caters to the needs of tertiary education in Bhutan and offers various higher education programmes such as education, business and management, engineering and physical sciences, computing and information science, biological sciences and agriculture, humanities and social sciences, Dzongkha language and literature.

Two of the key aspirations of RUB are “RUB as a source of inspiration for lifelong learning and RUB as a role model in practicing GNH values with corruption free and transparent decision-making processes” (RUB, Strategic Plan, 2018-2030, pp.8-9). These aspirations also envision the well-being of its academics. As academics in the college, many times, we (researchers) experienced our emotions impact ours and other's wellbeing. We also realised how we manage our emotions influences our relationship with others and this consequently affects our

personal as well our profession wellbeing. However, no research has been done to explore its relation and impacts.

Problem statement

Research findings on emotional intelligence (EI) claim significant relationship between emotional intelligence and well-being of a person. EI has also shown to play a meaningful role in academic success, well-being, as well as attainment in professional domains. For instance, Mehmood and Gulzar's study in Pakistan shows that emotional intelligence is related to happiness and wellbeing (2014). Likewise, there are many evidences reported from sectors such as medical professional (Boucher, 2016), police personnel (Brunetto, et al., 2012), and hospitality employees (Nguyen, 2019) that have described the correlation between EI and well-being. Studies have also reported the positive impact of EI training programmes on school teachers (Dolev & Leshem, 2017).

Moreover, institutions have recognized the advantages of high EI when working in positions like educators, leaderships and teams to achieve one's tasks and institutional competencies and objectives. Living in hi tech world, development of emotional intelligence is considered

as one of the most influential concepts “to demonstrates the ability to monitor one’s own and others feelings and emotions to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide ones’ thinking and action” (Rathnakara, 2014, p.41). Employees of any kind have to deal with certain duties and responsibilities. According to Kinman and Jones (2005), the level of psychological distress found amongst academic staff was unusually high when compared with other professional groups and the general population. Further, it was stated that academics reported high levels of life and professional conflict and this was the main source of psychological distress. Additional research also reports women are better in managing self-awareness, managing emotions, empathy and social skills and especially have greater capacity to understand others' emotions (Barrett & Bliss-Moreau, 2009; Fischer, et al., 2018).

Though, emotional intelligence has influenced many interests in a variety of fields, however, in Bhutan, there are no empirical studies carried out on emotional intelligence and its relation to well-being. Therefore, there is a need to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and well-being in the Bhutanese context. Thus, this study examined the concept of relationship between emotional intelligence and well-being among the women academics of the Royal University of Bhutan.

Research question

1. What relation do women academics of RUB perceive between emotional intelligence and well-being?

Sub questions

1. How do women academics at RUB define emotional intelligence and well-being?
2. How do women academics of RUB understand the impact of emotional intelligence on a person's well-being?

Significance of study

Being the first study on the topic in the context of Bhutan, we aspire the following as the significance of this study:

1. The results will be useful in gaining insights into emotional intelligence and well-being of the female academics of the Royal University of Bhutan.
2. The study will confirm many literature and previous research findings on emotional intelligence and well-being. Thus, this study will contribute to the world of knowledge on emotional intelligence and well-being.
3. Researchers in similar settings can relate to the findings to their contexts and conduct further research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Creswell (2014) defines literature review as a means to locate and summarize the studies about a topic. Literature review is used in a study (Creswell, 2014; Saunders et al., 2009; Silverman, 2013) to present results of similar study highlighting the areas where the researcher will provide fresh insights from the study. Literature review is also to relate the present study to progressive discussion in the literature, and to provide framework for comparison of a study with other study. This indicates that literature review informs and guides research and is an important element of research process. Thus, this section provides a succinct review of literature surrounding the concept of emotional intelligence and well-being, models of EI, EI and well-being, and EI and training.

Concept of emotional intelligence

It is interesting to concede how the early definitions of Darwin's emotional expression and Thorndike's social intelligence have influenced in conceptualizing the definitions of emotional intelligence. However, Daniel Goleman is credited for popularizing the concept of emotional intelligence with his 1995 landmark book, 'Emotional Intelligence.' According to him, emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize one's emotions and their effects on self and others as well as to empathize and hope (Goleman, 1995; Goleman, et al., 2002). He further exemplifies that knowing one's emotion and "self-awareness—recognizing a feeling as it happens—is the keystone of emotional intelligence." (Goleman, 1995, p.110).

In the recent times, the concept of EI has been the focus of numerous studies, given its link with positive work-related outcome, and also as a significant gauge of a person's professional and personal life (Lopes, 2016). EI is defined as the ability to identify, understand, and use emotions positively to manage anxiety, communicate well, empathize, overcome issues, solve problems, and manage conflicts (Drigas & Papoussi, 2018). EI is the capability to understand one's own feeling and evaluate the feeling of others. In other words, it is the ability to deal with others successfully. Building one's career and prospering psychologically solely depends on how well one treats oneself and one's work (Bar On, 2006; Goleman et al., 2002). It is also defined as the ability to regulate one's own and others' emotion to promote emotional and intellectual growth and to manage relationship and behaviours (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009; Mayer et al., 2016). EI concept is composed of a set of emotional abilities, recognizing emotional states in the self and others, using emotions to guide thought and behavior, understanding how

emotions shape behavior, and emotion regulation – that undoubtedly influence important social and personal outcomes (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009; Drigas & Papouli, 2018; Goleman et al., 2002; Mayer et al., 2016).

In conclusion, the fundamental concept of emotional intelligence means the ability to understand others' emotions and abilities and to adjust and control self and others in an adaptive manner. It is expected that individuals who have high emotional intelligence, show better social adaptability and social skills, which promotes well-being.

Concept of well-being

Well-being is generally reported as a concept that is complex and often misunderstood with lack of consensus among disciplines, languages and cultures. It conflates concepts such as, quality of life, positive mood state, happiness, and the ability to function well physically and mentally (Dodge et al., 2012; Lewis, 2019; Smith, 2005). Bar-On model explains wellbeing as “individuals who understand and accept themselves, strive to achieve personal goals and actualize their potential and who are content with themselves, others and life, in general” (2012, p. 13). Thus, the meaning of well-being is not fixed to a single thing or any number of things (Eraut & Whiting, 2008; Gasper, 2010; Haworth & Hart, 2007). In the context of this study, well-being is conceptualized as a state of being happy, healthy, and ability to function well physically and mentally.

Models of emotional intelligence

During the last two decades EI researchers have developed three major models: Ability (Mayer & Salovey, 2000), Mixed (Bar-On, 2006; Goleman, 1998) and trait EI models (Petrides et al., 2011). The main difference in these three categories is whether author perceives their EI as an innate human trait or a competence that can be systematically developed over time (Tripathy, 2018). A summary of the Goleman and Bar-on model are presented in the ensuing paragraphs.

According to Goleman's model, EI has five basic components viz. self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. Self-awareness is to have a complete idea of one's strengths, weaknesses, and needs. Self-regulation is how well one handles emotions. Motivation is the will one takes beyond all expectation that one has and it should come from within. Empathy is being considerate and aware of other people's emotions. Goleman (1995) contends that understanding these characteristics affects others as well as oneself. This indicates Goleman “associates emotional intelligence with a mixture of factors that include mental abilities related to intelligence and emotion as well as personality dispositions and traits”

(Bowen, et al., 2016, p.2), which is a key to successful and happy life (Horriago, 2011).

Bar-On's model of emotional intelligence reports emotional intelligence as process-oriented rather than outcome-oriented. It focuses on emotional and social abilities, the ability to deal with strong emotions, adapt to change and solve problems of a social or personal nature (Bar-On, 2002). Thus, Bar-On model describes EI using the five factors:

people who are accurately aware of and accept themselves, pursue constructive personal goals, are capable of effectively managing their emotions, are optimistic and content with themselves, their significant others and life in general tend to experience good health and wellbeing (2012, p.15).

In conclusion, the fundamental concept of emotional intelligence is the ability to understand others' emotions and abilities and to adjust and control self and others in an adaptive manner; it is expected that individuals who have high emotional intelligence, show better social adaptability and social skills, which promotes well-being.

Emotional intelligence and well-being

Literature highlights the major role of emotional intelligence when determining individual happiness. Numerous researchers have related emotional intelligence with happiness, such as subjective well-being, satisfaction with life, and better social relations (Bustamante et al., 2019; Rathnakara, 2014). Researchers have found a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. For instance, Malinauskas and Malinauskiene (2020)'s longitudinal study on university male students evidence a close association between EI and wellbeing of a person as someone with “higher EI can recognize and manage emotions in others (it helps them manage social situations) and have better possibilities to enhance their social support, which also contributes to an increase in their well-being” (p.11). Hence, knowledge of EI aids in strengthening a person's weaknesses into strengths, thereby, cultivating well-being. The finding relates positively with Nguyen's recent qualitative study exploring hotel workers' regulation of EI with customers that “the role of understanding one's own and others' personalities in the workplace, which helps explain their emotional expressions or behaviour in a certain situation” (Nguyen, 2019, p.223).

Guerra-Bustamante et al. (2019) analyzed the association between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and different levels of perceived happiness in adolescents. The finding reported an increase in happiness with increase in one's capacity of understanding and

regulation of emotional intelligence. Furthermore, a cross-sectional study that looked at the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of rural students in Sabah, Malaysia, showed that emotional intelligence could predict psychological well-being (Rathakrishnan et al., 2019). This indicates that capacities of emotional intelligence predict aspects related to personal well-being and a positive relation between life satisfaction and subjective happiness (Guerra-Bustamante et al., 2019; Rathakrishnan et al., 2019).

The connection between EI and a range of positive outcomes across the academic, social, and psychological and career domains among has been well-documented (Di Fabio et al., 2014; Perera & Di Giacomo, 2015). It is seen that people with higher emotional intelligence are well aware of their behaviour in their work place or otherwise (Ara, 2013). He further contends that people with higher level of emotional intelligence are seen to be able to handle stressful situation better, have higher satisfaction with life, and are happier. Research has also found EI to be associated with a variety of individual and social resources, such as resilience, positive self-evaluation, and social support (Di Fabio & Kenny, 2016; Perera & Di Giacomo, 2015). Emotional intelligence plays a huge role in impacting one's personal life as well as professional. Salovey and Mayer's (1990) seminal research on emotional intelligence points out the importance of knowing oneself as well as understanding others. Further, Bar-On (2006) suggests that people with higher EI perform better than those with lower EI in life. Mayer et al. (2017) explored EI in South African women leaders working in Higher Education Institutes to identify women leaders' strengths, foci and their possible areas of development. The findings showed women leaders mainly refer to intrapersonal emotional quotient (EQ), followed by interpersonal EQ, adaptability, stress management and, finally, general mood. The findings also showed ideas on what EQ components can be further developed.

In diverse life conditions growth of emotional intelligence draws a major impact in exploring the ways of handling different life hassles. Self-understanding is a key for better mental health. According to Mehmmood and Gulzar (2014), "People, who understand and manage their emotions in meaningful way, have more ability to put off their psychopathologies e.g. depression, anxiety and other disturbing emotional thoughts and mental health problems" (p. 179), and are highly emotionally intelligent (Hamachek, 2000). Zhang and Shi's (2017, pp. 984-985) study suggests that a person with high levels of EI "experience more success, and build stronger meaningful personal relationships with peers." Consequently, there is a

likelihood of performance improvement for both personal and professional associations.

In addition, work related pressure can have negative impact on wellbeing of academics, colleagues, university and quality of teaching (Kinman, 2014; Sliskovic & Sersic, 2011). More specifically, university educators need to fulfill demanding responsibilities of preparing and teaching lessons besides dealing with personal life and social relationships. All of these requirements may lead to physical, emotional and psychological pressure (Wynaden et al., 2013). This is reinforced by a study on job stress and academics in UK universities that reports of "academics who perceived lower levels of support and influence, more time constraints, higher levels of student demand and work-home interface demands and more role stressors tended to report poorer health" (Kinman, 2008, p.831). In addition, there is a view indicating that married women and who have greater roles in the family "tend to experience more emotional conflicts between work and family roles than young and single participants" (Nguyen, 2019, p.273). Therefore, personal accomplishment and professional effectiveness will be impacted because of emotional exhaustion (Bowen et al., 2016). For instance, EI may strengthen the person's perception of happiness and demonstrate that EI associates strongly with well-being (Wynaden et al., 2013). Further, the authors also state that individuals with high EI become more careful in regulating their emotions thereby, lowering the levels of distress and stress-related emotions and simultaneously, keeping a high level of wellbeing. This concludes that a person with a strong ability to manage and express emotions is likely to experience less stress in the workplace.

Emotional intelligence and training

Emotional intelligence has also gained attention as a focus of research and intervention for its promise as a set of skills that can be taught to enhance coping resources and promote well-being (Fernández-Berrocal, 2016; Martins et al., 2010; Schutte et al., 2007). Research also contends that emotional intelligence develops over time and can be improved through training (Bar-on, 2002; Mayer et al. 2017). Qualitative research to see the EI growth in the university leadership program students by Carter (2015) shows the experience of EI growth through workshops, teamwork activities, and being a part of a cohort. Further, Gilar-Corbí et al. (2018), randomized experimental study of an emotional intelligence training program using a multimethodological approach in a university in Spain, reports emotional competence can be taught in higher education. They further state that the university environment presents the ideal climate in which to optimize the emotional management that strengthens multiple

learning experiences. In the same line, Elias (2001) contends teaching emotional and social skills in educational institutions has a long-term effect on achievement as it affects academic achievement positively of students not only during the year they were taught but during the years that follow as well. Furthermore, Benzo et al. 's (2016) study 'Emotional intelligence: A novel outcome associated with wellbeing and self-management in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease' (COPD) reports that a trainable skill which promotes the ability to understand and regulate emotions through increased EQ may serve as a buffer against negative emotions and further symptom impairment in COPD.

The above discussion confirms emotional intelligence as a trainable skill. In this context, Goleman and Davidson (2017) report that daily practice of mindfulness enhances the ability to observe one's mind which leads to positive altered trait.

III. METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research method

Merriam (2009) defines qualitative research as a powerful tool for learning more about lives and the socio-historical context in which we live. Further, Creswell (2014), Denzin and Lincoln (2011), and Willis (2007) concur that qualitative research is an approach to understand the process of human and social behaviour that encompasses characteristics like "Natural setting, ...researcher as key instrument...inductive data analysis, participants' meaning, emergent design, and holistic account" (Creswell, 2014, p. 175). This study employs a qualitative research method.

Interpretive research approach

The research paradigm that guided this research approach is the interpretive approach. Creswell (2012) posits that interpretive approach believes reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds, which means that interpretive approach is concerned with how individuals make sense of their world and experiences. He further states that interpretive approach assumes that reality is socially constructed, that is, there is no single observable reality, rather, there are multiple realities, or interpretations, of a single event. This means, interpretive approach declines the positivists' view that the reality is objective, external to individuals where the social world can be understood in terms of general statements about human actions (Merriam, 2009). Further, Simons (2009) asserts interpretive research framework is appropriate when one wants to find out more about certain structures of experience, the subjective perspectives of the research participants, and specific interrelationship between

participants and environment. Norum, (2008, p.738), sums up the interpretive approach as follows:

An interpretive orientation seeks to understand the world from the point of the individuals. Truth must be understood from the perspectives of each individual. No perspective is right or wrong, and all are presented. More than one reality exists. The voices of those who participate in the study are the primary.

Thus, this approach is specifically chosen for this research as it is appropriate to the nature of the research.

Data collection procedure

The data were collected through semi-structured face-face interview and email interview. Saunders et al. (2009) define interview as a "purposeful discussion between two or more people" which can be highly structured, semi-structured or open" (p.319). In additional, it is also expressed that the use of interviews can help gather reliable data that are relevant to the research questions and objectives. This research followed interview protocol such as instruction for the interview to follow so that standard procedures are used from one interview to another, typically an ice- breaker question at the beginning, probes for the questions to follow up and ask participants to explain their ideas in a more detail or to elaborate on what they have said (Creswell, 2014).

All face-face interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The researchers annotated the transcriptions to reflect non-verbal data such as tones of voice, body language and visible emotions. The purpose of this was to ensure that the data analysis took full advantage of the additional information made available by conducting face-to-face interviews (Minichiello, et al., 2008).

Participants and sampling

The participants for this study were selected using purposive sampling technique (Creswell, 2014) that allowed the researchers to use their judgments to select participants that will best answer the research questions and meet the objectives. A total of 14 women academics from different member colleges of RUB took part in this research.

Data analysis procedures

Data analysis is the process of making sense of the data to form answer to the research questions (Creswell, 2014; Merriam, 2009; Mertler & Charles, 2005) and making sense of data involves "consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read- it is the process of making meaning" (Merriam, 2009, p.176).

This study used Creswell's (2014) data analysis process to analyse the data. Coding was the primary measure taken to organize, categorize and make sense of the data. Colour codes (colour highlights) were attached to words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs. The steps followed for the analysis are as follows:

- Prior to the analysis, the face to face interview which was audio taped was transcribed and each transcription was carefully read and words, phrases or sentences that indicated answers to the research questions were noted.
- Emerging categories or themes were color coded.
- Arranged the transcripts together according to the questions and constantly emerging themes were categorized to find common themes.
- Finally, the emerging themes were collapsed to consider as significant findings in relation to the research questions.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following section elucidates the findings and discussions on the significant themes. These themes include:

- Concept of emotional intelligence
- Concept of well-being
- Intrapersonal relationship
- Interpersonal relationship
- General mood

Concept of emotional intelligence

More than half of the participants have defined intelligence as being aware of one's emotions. This is exemplified in the quote by L14 "Emotional is being aware of the things that's happening around you." This definition is expanded by L3 who said that emotional intelligence is understanding as well as managing one's emotions for better outcome when dealing with others. Further, participants also contended that emotional intelligence is being able to understand, express, motivate and manage one's emotions (L11) and empathizing with others (L13). Consistent with this finding, emotional intelligence is stated as the ability to understand, regulate one's own and others emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth and to manage relationships and behaviours (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009; Mayer et al., 2016) and the ability to recognize one's emotions and their effects on self and others (Goleman et al., 2002).

Concept of well-being

Well-being is defined by the participants in a myriad of

ways. For example, well-being is the state of mind being tandem with physical environment (L7, L12), at peace with oneself (L8), being happy (L3, L5, L14), physical, mental, emotional, psychological wellness (L4, L6, L9, L12, L13, L14), and being content professionally and personally (L1, L13). Further, L11 stated well-being as "being able to thrive in spite of problems." According to L12, well-being "has to do a lot with whom you surround yourself." This finding corroborates the literature that shows well-being is not solely about feelings at a single point in time or how materialistic one feels, but it encompasses how human beings interact and communicate with others (Huppert, 2014).

Intrapersonal relationship

The intrapersonal relationship relates to emotional awareness, self-management skills and self-reflection. These factors are explicated in the following sub-sections:

Emotional awareness

Almost half of the participants expressed that possessing emotional awareness such as the ability to be aware of and understand one's emotions promoted well-being. For example, L11 stated:

Emotions influence our thought processes. It influences where we attend and how we perceive, process, store and retrieve information. When one is emotionally intelligent, it helps us channel our emotions on the positive aspects of our life. It helps us recognize the strengths and good things in our life while at the same time acknowledging the value of weakness and negative things in our life and sees good things in almost everything.

Similarly, L9 added "I think there is positive relationship between EI and wellbeing. If a person is emotionally intelligent that person wellbeing will be definitely be positive." Therefore, the responses summarize Goleman's (1995) statement that emotional self-awareness is to have a complete idea of all one's strengths, weaknesses, and needs and understanding that these characteristics affect others as well as oneself. The findings are consistent with Malinauskas and Malinauskiene (2020), Mahmood and Gulzar, (2014), and Rathakrishnan (2019) which demonstrate that the ability to recognize and manage emotions could contribute to an increase in well-being.

Self-management abilities

Many participants expressed that being able to control their emotions aided in better relationship with colleagues and students, thereby promoting better well-being. For example, L4 contended:

... so, if you have the emotional intelligence, in the first place you're able to understand your own emotions and not only being able to understand, you're also able to control your emotions. So, when I am able to control my own emotion and when I am happy with what I have, I think it contributes to my wellbeing.

Similarly, L5 added:

How it affects you emotionally and then how you deal those situations I think has lot to do with the wellbeing like sometimes there might be times you might want to get very angry or you are feeling very sad but then I think you need to reason out whether these are really useful, know? Be it maybe just like that so but you may destroy your wellbeing by getting deep into that emotion which may harm you but you may also get out of it intelligently if you think know? It is of no use or there might be a different way of responding to those type of intelligence there are other ways you can keep yourself busy I think (question asked) there is definitely there is.

In addition, participants also asserted that when they are able to control their emotions and are mindful before speaking or reacting, it fostered positive interaction with others, thus, impacting wellbeing (L1, L2, L9, L12). Literature also shows that people with higher level of emotional intelligence were seen to handle stressful situation better, experience more success, have higher satisfaction with life, and are happier (Ara, 2013; Hamachek, 2000; Mehmod & Gulzar, 2014; Zhang & Shi, 2017).

Many participants expressed of encountering challenges in managing emotions. According to L1, " it takes lots of practice to be emotionally intelligent at all time and in all situations; while I can handle some situation intelligently, I cannot say the same for all situations so that takes time." Further, L3 claimed that "when you are not able to control your emotion and at the same time when you are not able to identify and analyse the emotions of the other person. I think these are some challenges." Similarly, L4 expressed:

Sometimes, it can be challenging because no matter how much you try to control your own emotion sometimes they overpower you and then you become a slave of course. I think that is a challenge not being able to always subdue your emotion, not being able to always become a master of your own emotion.

The study resonates the same line stated by Hamachek (2000) that a person's emotional intelligence is

an important variable to cope with personal tension and workplace stress.

Self-reflection

Participants communicated that to nurture their emotional intelligence, they read, watch or listen to people with high emotional intelligence (L1, L4, L6) and listen to spiritual discourses and indulge in a lot of self-reflections (L1, L2, L8, L9, L13). Further, L3 suggested:

I think it's good for people to go into workshops like that where people conduct and talk about how to deal with emotions. And to talk to each other and then to find out your areas of weakness and then to improve. I think those might be some areas you can use to improve your emotional intelligence.

The above findings confirm emotional intelligence as trainable skill which develops over time and can be improved through training (Bar-on, 2002; Benzo et al., 2016; Carter, 2015; Mayer et al., 2017).

Interpersonal relationship

Another theme that emerged on the relationship between EI and well-being is the interpersonal relationship with focus area such as social skills and professional performance. The focus areas are discussed with relevant excerpts and literature.

Social skills

Participants confirmed possessing the knowledge of social skills was an important aspect in upholding person's EI and well-being (L7, L2, L8). For example, they said "Being adaptable" (L7) and "maintaining balance and equanimity" (L2) helped to avoid unpleasant situation. This view was echoed by L14 who said "if someone is in a bad mood you just can't go there and crack a joke to that person. So, this is my simple example of how to act according to the situation." Therefore, being able to understand others' emotion and being able to maintain relationship with others (L9, L11) aided to "ease the relationship" (L10). The importance of social skills was further highlighted by other participants. For instance, they said, "one should know what to say, how to say, whom to say and when to say" (L11) and being aware of the things that were happening around also meant "respect and accept diversity of thoughts, actions and beliefs" (L7). Additionally, L2 said, "When one is emotionally content and at peace with one's situation and condition, one exudes positive energy. And this positive energy radiates in our behavior, in our communication, attitude, personality and our interaction with others." This enables a person to become sensitive towards the well-being of the other person and creating a healthy environment for them (L5, L6, L12). The findings showed clear co-relation to Goleman's social skill from his Emotional Intelligence

Model (1995) that being aware and understanding one's strengths and weaknesses of oneself and others were the key to successful and happy life (Horriagon, 2011; Nguyen, 2019). Correlation was also found for emotional and social abilities with Bar-On's model (2002) of the ability to deal with strong emotions, adapt to change and solve problems of a social or personal nature to "experience good health and wellbeing" (Bar-On, 2012, p.15). The findings further correlated with Zhang and Shi's finding that person with high levels of EI built "stronger meaningful personal relationships with peers" (2017, pp. 984-985).

Professional performance

The concept of EI had been linked with positive work-related outcome (Lopes, 2016; Di Fabio et al., 2014; Perera & DiGiacomo, 2015). To accord, L4 opined "When I'm contended, I perform well in my profession." This opinion was supported by L14 who stated, "even if you are physically well if you are not emotionally well you cannot be a productive like whatever your responsibilities maybe productive teacher". In addition, L8 clearly exemplified how being aware of one's emotions could bring about a positive change in classroom performance:

To start my day, I need to be aware of my emotion, the kind of emotion I am as I carry from my house and how I carry to the class and how I use my emotions, how I deal with my students. It's very important for me as a teacher. I put bracket to my own emotions as I enter the class and I open up to the emotion and open up to the students so that I am aware of their emotions and I interact and react according to their emotions.

Likewise, Bar On (2006), Ara (2013) and Hamachek (2000) found EI as the important factor to cope with workplace stress and that people with higher EI cope stressful situation better in workplace and were happier. To resonate this, L12 voiced "Taking time to think, self-realization and taking the things in a positive way does results in positive performance." There was evidence in Nguyen's study that "the role of understanding one's own and others' personalities in the workplace, helped explain their emotional expressions or behaviour in a certain situation" (2019, p.223). On the other hand, it was voiced by three participants that being in a state of internal turmoil would definitely manifest in external behavior thereby hampering the way one reacted to external events and vice-versa (L3, L7, L14). This could very well relate to work pressure that could have negative impact on wellbeing of academics, university and quality of teaching (Sliskovic & Sersic, 2011; Kinman, 2014) and professional effectiveness because of emotional exhaustion (Bowen et al., 2016). L14 stressed the negative effect of emotion on profession as

"when I am very angry or stressed internally and it affects my performance as a teacher." The effect of EI on profession can be summarized with need to firstly work on the personal well-being in order to balance professional life (L11, L12). Consistent with this finding, Goleman (2006, p.14) highlighted that "... such interpersonal job has countless variations, but they all come down to our ability to change another person's mood, and they ours."

General mood

Another prominent theme that emerged from the study was the mood connecting to EI and wellbeing. The study findings indicated stress related emotions impacted mood and that subsequently affected person's thoughts, behaviour and job performance. Hence, the findings are parallel with other research regarding the positive and negative emotions having direct or indirect impact on well-being (Rathnakara, 2014) as well as on personal, social and professional outcomes (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009; Drigas & Papousta, 2018; Goleman et al., 2002; Mayer et al., 2016). Most of the participants said that individuals undergoing a feeling of overworked or lowly motivated experience affected performance. This view is explicitly illustrated by L12:

Moods are the results of what our mind perceives and how you take it. If we have a healthy mind set, the mood is happier and vice versa. For me personal problems and working under stress affects my mood. To be honest, it affects you more negatively than positively at initial state.

L11 also conceded "If one is happy everything is perceived through the lens of happiness, which can be rosy and colourful but on the other hand if one is unhappy everything can appear dark and gloomy." L10, further expounded that "when I am experiencing positive emotion, I seem to perform better because my window of tolerance is expanded." However, recognising and managing mood, contribute to enhancing social, emotional and professional wellbeing as expressed by L11:

Emotions influence our thought processes. It influences where we attend and how we perceive, process, store and retrieve information. When one is emotionally intelligent, it helps us channel our emotions on the positive aspects of our life. It helps us recognize the strengths and good things in our life while at the same time acknowledging the value of weakness and negative things in our life.

The above findings also confirmed the finding by Goleman (2006) which showed that emotions have consequences, thus one should recognize and swing them for better.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This qualitative study examined how women academics of RUB view emotional intelligence and well-being, and also the impact of emotional intelligence on well-being. The study revealed RUB women academic's understanding of EI as being able to regulate one's emotions for self-management, self-awareness, and social awareness. It also revealed that persons who are aware and have high emotional intelligence, display better resilience, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills and better moods which promote well-being.

The study also revealed well-being is not only about physical, mental and emotional happiness, but also how one interacts and communicates with others. In addition, the findings confirmed that persons with high level of EI are able to handle stressful situation better, and experience more success, thus, enhancing well-being. The study also confirmed the challenges faced by participants to be emotionally intelligent in different situations, and aspiration for enhancement of their emotional intelligence through training. Therefore, the study recommends initiation of training in terms of workshops or professional development to enhance emotional intelligence.

Further, a majority of participants used self-reflection as one significant strategy to regulate their emotions for maintaining healthy relationship with others. This indicates the importance for a person to be able to reflect on daily basis for personal and professional wellbeing. Thus, to promote ones' self-reflection and enhance well-being, there is an importance to have mindfulness programmes in the colleges of RUB.

This study has opened up the following possible directions for future research:

1. This research only explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and well-being from the perspectives of women academics. Future research could study the relationship between the two variables from the perspectives of men.
2. One of the findings revealed the promotion of EI in the RUB colleges. Future research could explore the finding to recognize whether EI development programmes are necessary to enhance the emotional intelligence and well-being of the academics.
3. This study was qualitative in nature. This study could be replicated using a mixed method approach.
4. The present study explored the relationship between EI and well-being of RUB academics. Further research can be conducted to understand

how and in what specific contexts EI impact the professional job of the academics.

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